

ALCOVA HEIGHTS

The Newsletter of the Alcova Heights Neighborhood, Arlington, Virginia November 2013



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Personal Connections

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NEXT MEETING

Alcova Heights Citizens Association Meeting

Date: Thursday, November 21

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Baptist Church,
8th and Monroe

Program:

- 1) Election of delegates
- 2) Presbyterian Church redevelopment update
- 3) Review of Halloween Parade/Party
- 4) Traffic Committee report
- 5) Conservation Plan update
- 6) New trees

Getting to Know You

In Alcova Heights, Making Personal Connections is the Tie That Binds

by Sara Uzel, AHCA President

Dear Neighbors:

I recently returned from my first trip to Europe, and after experiencing so many new and wonderful things, I have been thinking recently about what makes a neighborhood or community home and why Alcova Heights has been such an integral part of my life. I frequently share stories with my work colleagues about the good times and the occasional bad times in our neighborhood. Most have nothing that compares to our close-knit community.

One person on my staff asked recently how many people I could name on my street. I pulled up Alcova on Google and was amazed that I could identify a resident or a pet by name in all but five houses on 6th Street. She asked how I got to know so many neighbors. Living here for almost 20 years has certainly helped, but as I look back, I can identify a handful of key ways we were able to get to know people:

- 1) *Walking the neighborhood:* There's no better way to meet people than a casual stroll on Alcova's tree-lined streets. You're sure to come across a friendly face or two on every block.
- 2) *Spending time on the front porch:* We have met many people just by saying hello as they walked by. Sometimes it starts with an inquiry about a pet, admiring a baby in a stroller, or maybe a question about one of our trees or plants.
- 3) *Being the parents of a preschooler:* Alcova has great resources for parents to meet other parents, from the babysitting co-op to play groups to the vibrant community of school bus stop gatherings that happen every day during the school year.
- 4) *Joining the listserv* – The Alcova Heights listserv (http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Alcova_Heights/info) is a great way to stay informed and make connections. There are a few people I have never even met face to face but whom I have great relationships with on the listserv.

I find now that I have an empty nest, I enjoy watching our young neighbors make their own personal connections: meeting at the bus stop; walking to school; kids that only a few years ago needed babysitters who are now baby-

Sara's column cont'd. from page 1

sitters themselves; middle schoolers who hang out and chat on the "Stone Wall" at the corner before heading home to do homework.

A number of years ago we established some groups to help people find others with common interests: a bridge group; a knitting group; a restaurant group. It's a great way to bring like-minded folks together. If you have a particular interest and are looking for neighbors to join in, I encourage you to put something out on the listserv. You might be surprised by the response!

Have a great holiday season, everyone. I hope you all get to enjoy the company of your wonderful neighbors during the festive days ahead. I also hope to see many of you next Thursday, November 21, at another great venue for getting to know people: the bi-monthly Citizens Association meeting at the Baptist Church.

Sara

Alcova to Present Conservation Plan on January 14

Alcova Heights will present its Neighborhood Conservation Plan to the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee on January 14, 2014. Neighborhood officials will also speak before the County Planning Board and the full County Board of Supervisors sometime in February 2014. Neighbors Kelly Holly, Bill Rapp, and Marie Van Ness are working on the presentations.

AHCA Elections This Thursday

On November 21, 2013, the Alcova Heights Citizens Association will hold elections to select two delegates (a One-Year Delegate slot, currently held by Amber Baum, and a Two-Year Delegate slot, currently held by TJ Ball). Nominations (including re-nominations of the current delegates) can be sent to the AHCA Secretary <ahca.secretary@alcovaheights.com> or submitted via the Alcova Heights website <<http://alcovaheights.com/civic-association/ahca2013delegatenominations/>>.

Presbyterian Church Property Update

by Sara Uzel, AHCA President

At the September 2013 Citizens Association meeting, the Arlington Presbyterian Church (APC) and the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) presented their ideas and plans regarding the development of the church property on Lincoln Street and Columbia Pike. APAH presented initial sketches and ideas to the association and fielded feedback and questions from the community.

This Sunday, November 17, the APC's congregation members will vote on whether or not to proceed with the redevelopment plans. If the vote is no, the property will not be redeveloped as proposed. If the vote is yes, then the Association will work with the developer in the planning stages to ensure Alcova Heights residents are able to provide comments on the design and construction.

On November 20, the Arlington Historic Preservation Office will hold a hearing to determine if the church qualifies as a historic landmark/building. If the property meets two of 11 criteria, it will enter a process of "study and research" by the Preservation Office. Based on this study and public meetings, the Preservation Office will make recommendations on what should be preserved and what can be developed.

If the project proceeds, 9th Street neighbor Frank Ebbert will chair the committee that will work with the developer.

There will be an update on this project at the Association meeting on Thursday, November 21.

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Conventional wisdom advises home buyers not to get emotional about a property when making an offer. Here's the catch. A buyer will naturally be emotional about the right property, the home they are about to sink so much of their lives and money into. At the same time, in a hot real estate market like this one, buyers have to be prepared for the real possibility that one or more of their offers will not be accepted. The people you care about need to have a real estate advisor you trust to help them cultivate a sense of detachment from the outcome of their offers while helping them craft the best, cleanest offers they can. If an offer isn't accepted, buyers have to get right back on the home buying horse and keep looking!

If you or someone you know wants to buy a home, call me at 703-217-9090 or email me at casey@caseyoneal.com. I'll send you a copy of my free report, ***How to Stop Spending Money on Rent and Own a Home Instead***. Who do you know who's thinking about buying a home? Please let them know I can help them write strong offers!

When selling, it's important to work with a skilled real estate consultant like me who can advise you, and the people you care about, which repairs and updates will result in the fastest sale and greatest gain. ***Before you place your home on the market*** - I can help you be as ready as possible. Contact me for a *Room By Room Review* and I can share quick and easy tips to make your house show like a model home. I'll advise you what to do (and more importantly what NOT to do) to obtain maximum price and a quicker sale to obtain the best return.



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Spotlight on a Neighbor: Breana Bayraktar and Jeremy Edwards Had Big Shoes to Fill When They Volunteered to Take on the Popular Halloween Parade

by Karen Osterloh

When neighbor Breana Bayraktar heard that Dellynn Periandri, the driving force behind Alcova Heights's seasonal festivities for the past several years, was leaving the community, she thought about how her children had always loved the annual Halloween Party and decided she would step in. She quickly contacted association President Sara Uzel to volunteer.

Breana recalls being a little concerned that she wouldn't be able to handle all of the party planning by herself. Luckily, fellow neighbor Jeremy Edwards was contacting Sara around the same time with the same offer to help. "Our timing was pretty perfect," laughs Breana.

Breana and Jeremy had both lived in Alcova Heights for many years, but hadn't met each other until this year, when they decided to become more active in the civic association. They began planning the Halloween festivities back in August, working from an extensive catalogue of duties left by Dellynn. "Dellynn's checklist was extraordinarily helpful," Jeremy recalls.

Breana took care of recruiting volunteers and donations, food, decorations, crafts, and games. Jeremy, meanwhile, worked behind the scenes with the police, fire station, and Arlington County to ensure that proper permits for the parade and the park were pulled, that we had a reservation for a pavilion, and that the fire truck was available.

New traditions

Breana and Jeremy wanted to continue all of the traditions that residents had come to love from past Halloween parties, including the parade, raffle, and goodie bags for children. But they also wanted input from the community on possible changes and new activities. They went to the listserv and association meetings with requests for feedback.

"One of the major suggestions we received was to have less candy and more emphasis on fun and activities," Jeremy notes. They asked volunteers to donate a variety of food this year, including fruits and vegetables in addition to candy.



Breana Bayraktar



Jeremy Edwards

They added new games and an arts and crafts table where children (and some adults) could make foam pumpkins and paper masks.

But perhaps the biggest hit this year was a treat the little ghosties and ghoulies weren't expecting: . . . A PONY!! "We hadn't planned on having a pony, it was just a lucky happenstance," Jeremy said. "Some of my close family members live on a horse farm and kindly offered to bring it." The pony was quite popular and spent its entire afternoon dutifully ferrying children on her back all over Alcova Park.

The only hitch to this year's event was small and unnoticed. Unbeknownst to partygoers, Breana had misplaced the list of answers to one of the guessing games and had no idea what the right answers were. A quick trip back to their house by Breana's husband located the list where it had inadvertently fallen in their driveway.

Next year's party

Breana and Jeremy said they received many thanks from neighbors grateful that the Alcova Halloween tradition is continuing. Both say they're ready and willing to help with next year's party, with perhaps one change in the planning process:

"I'd like to make it more of a committee function next time," Breana notes. "Jeremy and I made many quick decisions without an opportunity for suggestions by others. I would like to have more community input in the future."

Both Jeremy and Breana agree that they would be remiss if they didn't thank the many other volunteers who helped make the party successful by giving their time for set-up and cleanup, and donating food, decorations, and craft items: Rosa Cheney, Melissa Daddio, Amber Baum, Susi Lill, Lois Koontz, and Breana's parents and husband.

Breana lives on Monroe Street with her husband, Recep, and children Kerem, Ceyda, and Feyza. Jeremy lives on 8th Street with his wife, Gretchen, and children Cole, Eli, and Avery.

Alcova Heights Halloween Parade and Party

October 26, 2013



Announcements and Milestones

Beloved Barcroft Employee Dies

Diane Boatwright, Barcroft Elementary's beloved lunch and playground attendant known to the children as "Grandma," died suddenly on Monday, November 11. Her untimely death left the school and the hundreds of people whose lives she touched in shock.

"Diane dearly loved Barcroft Elementary, and in turn, she was dearly loved by our children and our community," recalls Barcroft PTA President Julie Rotherham. "She was the type of person who was always there, someone you could always count on to show up, and someone who more often than not, would leave your presence with a kind word. She will be dearly missed."

In lieu of flowers, a fund has been created to help Diane's family pay for funeral arrangements and other expenses. Donations may be made at: <http://www.youcaring.com/memorial-fundraiser/everyone-s-grandma-diane-boatwright/105642>. Sympathy cards maybe be dropped off at the Barcroft school office.

BIRTHDAYS

Derek Thien Favila of Lincoln Street celebrated a birthday on November 4.

Grace Sinkins of 9th Road S turned 8 on November 4.

Oliver Saltiel of Lincoln Street celebrated his 4th birthday on November 5.

7th Street neighbors Marty and Suzanne Gold celebrated the birth of their son, **Ari Benjamin Gold**, on September 23. Their daughter **Nora Gold** also turned 3 on November 8.

WEDDINGS

Kristina V. Dorville of 6th Street and **Michael Wilkis** will be married on November 30 in Bethlehem, PA.

HONORS AND RECOGNITIONS

Michaela Sims of 8th Street earned the prestigious "Angels in Adoption" award from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute for her work lobbying on behalf of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. Read more here: <http://www.omaha.com/article/20131021/NEWS2002/131019148>.

On October 12, after a full day of auditions and elimination, 8th Street's **Jon Stewart** took second place at the grand finale of Disney World/Hollywood Studios daily "American Idol" contest. See Jon's performance here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOCNtIZ3P54>

7th Street neighbor **Mike Rhode** authored a chapter for the book *Medical Museums: Past, Present, Future* by the Royal College of Surgeons of England this summer. His piece is titled, "An Army Museum or a National Collection? Shifting Interests and Fortunes at the National Museum of Health & Medicine."

NEW NEIGHBORS

Life-long Arlington residents **Josh and Andrea Hewitt** recently moved into a newly built house on 8th Street with their two children.

BARCROFT ELEMENTARY UPDATE

Barcroft Elementary School announced that it has met all of the U.S. government's federal accountability measures and is **fully accredited** by the Virginia Department of Education.

Construction on the **new school playground is complete** and neighbors are invited to come take a look.

On Thursday, November 21 the school will host a special assembly to **dedicate the completed outdoor Leonardo Library**. The assembly will honor special guest Mrs. Miriam Hughey-Guy, Barcroft Principal for 20 years.

On Monday, December 2, from 5 to 8 p.m., the **Clarendon Silver Diner** will donate 20% of receipts to the Barcroft PTA. Use your Eat Well Do Well card and earn even more for Barcroft.

Traffic and Infrastructure Committee Update by Mike Kigin

Here's an update on ongoing traffic and infrastructure concerns in the neighborhood:

1) Excess Utility Poles: Coincidentally or otherwise, within two weeks after contacting the county concerning the excess telephone poles on 8th Street, most of them were removed. The leaning pole at 8th and Lincoln is still leaning, and one lone pole remains at the corner of 8th and Quincy, but they have been brought to the county's attention.

2) Unfinished 8th Street Sidewalk: Regarding the unfinished sidewalk and curb work at 8th and Monroe, the County provided the following explanation:

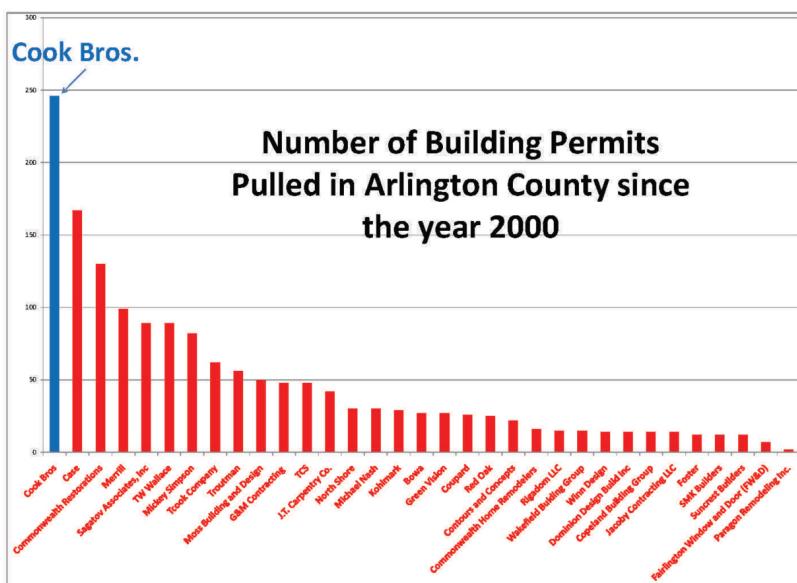
"There were some design delays at the County in finalizing the environmentally friendly storm water drainage system at that location, which will ultimately reduce storm water runoff into the Chesapeake Bay while retaining ground water in the Alcova Heights neighborhood. Following the completion of that delayed design work, County staff has been experiencing many delays over the past several months in having Washington Gas relocate some gas lines near S. Monroe St. Despite repeated contact between County and Washington Gas staffs over the past several months, the gas lines have yet to be relocated. The County has no control over Washington Gas schedules, though reminder messages have been sent to them by County utilities coordi-

nation and engineering staffs. The delay in Washington Gas completing the relocation of gas lines is preventing the County's contractor from starting work on the storm water pipe installation at the easterly end of the project."

3) 8th Street Parking: At the association's request, the county has now restricted weekday parking on the north side of 8th Street between Randolph and George Mason Drive to two hours at a time to allow daytime users of the park to have sufficient parking. Arlington Hall workers had been using those spaces all day, Monday through Friday.

Feel free to contact me at mikekigin@gmail.com or at 703-920-4899 if you have any questions or additional traffic or infrastructure issues.

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Fall Flourish: There's Still Time to Get Some Perennials in the Ground

by Janet Draper, Master Gardener

It is not too late to plant!

If you are looking to add a few more things to your garden this year, you still have time, and could even find some really great deals at some of the local nurseries. Most local nurseries are slashing prices to clear space for the incoming Christmas trees. Often you can pick up plants at 50 to 75 percent off. But beware: Some deals are really not worth bringing home.



Rhododendron

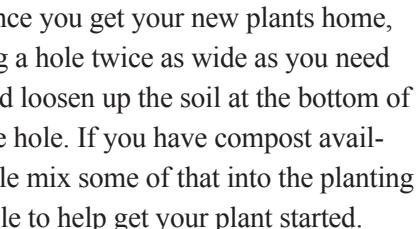
Fall is an excellent time to be planting most perennials, bulbs, and deciduous trees and shrubs (plants that lose their foliage during the winter). This is because we normally have a couple of months yet before the ground freezes, and that gives the plants time to get established before facing the challenges of winter.



Rhododendron

Planting broadleaf evergreens (plants that have broad leaves that they retain all winter, like rhododendrons and cherry laurels) becomes quite risky this late in the season, since those plants don't go into a winter dormant period. It is best to leave those at the nursery for them to overwinter.

Bulbs should be solid and firm. If they are dried up and look like prunes, give them a pass. What you are looking for in plants at this time of the year is a solid root mass with new white roots showing. Don't be afraid to pop the pot off of a perennial or small shrub and check out the roots. If it is a balled and burlapped (B&B) tree or shrub, look for a solid, well formed rootball. You do not want to have wiggle room around the base of the trunk and the soil line.



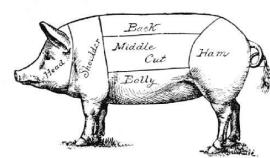
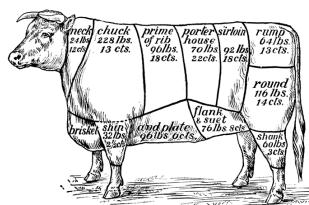
A close-up photograph showing a tree trunk wrapped in a large, light-colored burlap sack. The burlap is held in place by several strands of twine and metal wire, which are tied around the trunk and the base of the burlap. The ground in the background is dark soil.

Balled and burlapped

Be sure to remove anything that is wrapped around the trunk, because if left, it could strangle the plant later as it grows. If you cannot remove all of the burlap, remove as much as possible and make X cuts through what you cannot get off. This will help the roots make it through it and get to the soil.

And a final step in fall planting is to water. Yes, be sure to really water your new plants so they become established and flourish for years to come.

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